The Idaho IBM-PC

NEWSLETTER

Idaho IBM-PC Users Group
P.O. Box 9136
Boise, Idaho 83707

BOISE, ID 837
SEP 4
1985

USA
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Allen Powell
2501 North 32nd

Boise, ID   83702

NEXT MEETING

Date : Tuesday, September 6
      (the second Tuesday)

Time : 7:00pm

Place: Borah High School
    : B-Wing Room 126

WHERE TO WRITE

Idaho IBM PC Users Group
P.O. Box 9136
Boise, Idaho 83707

Questions concerning the group can be directed to any of the following people:

Editor:Bob Robles   342-7250
Librarian:Richard Chambers 939-9120
Treasurer:Tom McIntyre   344-7194

You can also communicate with us via the IBM-PC SIG (Special Interest Group) on Gem State Data Access BBS at 375-2224

PRINTER RIBBON BUY

As reported in the last newsletter, we are able to purchase printer ribbons for our members at the prices shown below. We are trying to put together a substantial order before we send off for them, so if you need printer ribbons, let us know. You may phone us with your order, or advise us at the next meeting. There are no minimum order requirements.

Epson MX-80	$4.25 ea
Epson MX-100	5.50 ea
Okidata 83	2.00 ea
Okidata 84	4.25 ea

Here's your chance to stock up!

STEERING COMMITEE NOTES

The steering committee met Aug 22nd at Rich Chambers home and forged out the the following:

1. Soon, you will be able to call or write me and order the Public Domaine Software disk that interests you for delivery at the next meeting. We will copy the requested disk onto one of our NASHUA diskettes and have it ready for you at our next meeting. The cost will be $2.00 per diskette copied. This is a considerable savings over the present method ($1.50 for just the copying of a diskette), because you not only get the software; you also get the new NASHUA Diskette. For those of you who were perfectly satisfied with the old method, it will also remain in effect.

2. Allen Powell volunteered to make up some professional-looking posters which shall be posted in public places throughout the area. These posters will advertise our meeting times and dates, and generally allow the computer using public to know that we are here.

3. We accepted Bruce Burns' offer to demonstrate the features of the new Leading Edge model "D" at our September meeting.

4. Accepted Gregg Pierce's offer to demonstrate an Integrated Software package called SMART. (We had a preview demo of this package a couple weeks ago, and were quite impressed.)

5. Determined that the Newsletter required no changes at the present. Gregg Pierce will look into having some computer-related cartoons designed for occasional insertion.

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GROUP PURCHASES

As mentioned at the last meeting, we are currently able to purchase Printer Ribbons at a very reasonable price. Our supplier handles only Epson and Okidata ribbons and the most expensive of these are available to our members for less than $5.50 each, a considerable savings. We are still seeking ways to better serve our members, and if you have any ideas or requests--let us know.

GROUP SOFTWARE CATALOG

The Group library is currently available on diskette as well as in hard-copy form. If you wish to have the most up-to-date catalog, your best bet is to get the catalog in disk form. I will make every effort to keep the disk-based catalog current. We have also squeezed the catalog, and associated download files to a more manageble size. This will require the use of our unsqeezer and unlibrary'er programs in order to make the catalog printable, however these two archiving programs are quite simple to use. In Fact, we shall have a demonstration of these programs at a future meeting.

If you have a modem, you may now call me directly and have a file, or set of files downloaded to your computer system. In addition, we have assumed SYSOP responsibility for the IBM SIG on the GEM STATE DATA ACCESS BBS. We hope to expand the services available to IBM and compatible users of this SIG, and make it a communications mecca for local and long-distance users. There is presently a small portion of our software library on the board and available for download.

REVIEW: FINANCIAL MANAGER

The Financial Manager package is basically an accounting package for new or intermediate users. This is a complete "double entry" account manager, which includes the everyday financial accounts: Payables, Receivables, Assets, Liabilities, Etc. You may customize your chart of Accounts as you wish, however, the various Reports and Statements supported by this application are pretty much 'Plain Vanilla' options which are not overly customizable. This application is written in Assembler language, thus it is difficult for most users to 'get into' the code to make the system do exactly as you wish.

This is a Freeware package. This means, if you like the program and find it useful to you, the author would appreciate a contribution. In fact, a 'fill in the blanks' receipt is included upon the disk for your convenience. In addition, there is a 15 page documentation file available for you on the disk. This file explaines the uses of the program in some detail. Also, there are two 'example' sets of accounts included. One is a small business set, while the other concentrates on the home accountant.

The Program is quite easy to operate and set-up. In fact, we utilized this package as part of our Cost Accounting class at BSU last semester, taking our data from the class textbook and using Financial Manager to complete our classroom assignments. The program makes no assumptions about your accounting expertise. The documentation is directed towards the beginning user, and this, coupled with the example account files, make using this program a snap.

Rich Chambers, Librarian 939-9120

Opportunity for people who write

Are you interested in being a co-
author for a potential IBM book? Do
you have a draft geared to business
or other professionals? Do you have
an idea for upgrading an existing
IBM book? If so, contact Norma
Vidinoff, 2253 Spinnaker Circle,
Longmont, Colorado 80501 or call
(303) 678-7534 between 6-7 PM.

D I S C O U N T S

The following individuals and local
merchants are offering discounts to
any registered members.

CompuShop is offering a 10% discount
off the normal CompuShop retail
price on all stock to registered
IPUG members.

Bruce Burns (R&L Data) is personally
extending a 15% discount off
everything in the store, except the
AT line, to all registered members.
note: you must deal directly with
Bruce.

Borbaki Inc. will sell their
Directory Command System called 1Dir
(pronounced wonder), which normally
retails for $95, for $75 to club
members. Thanks to Chris & Cindy.

OUR BBS GETS A FACE LIFE

As a lot of you already know, our
users group is the sponsor of the
only IBM-PC electronic bulletin
board special interest group (SIG)
in Idaho. The entire BBS has just
been re-organized and expanded.
There will soon be features made
available to user group members
only! This is a first class BBS and
is run by Chuck and Lois Keyes. Lois
is the sysop and Bob Robles is a
remote sysop for the system with
Rich Chambers working his magic on
the IBM-PC SIG.

HALF PRICED HARDWARE AND SOFT

Learned Mahn, a local software
developement company, is selling
some of the software and hardware
that they have accumulated for half
of what it cost. Some of this is
BRAND NEW!

1.   PCNet hardware and software for
      2 stations
2.   Business Library
      General Ledger
      A/P
      A/R
      Librarian
3.   Metafile system plus A/R system
4.   Microsoft Pascal Compiler
5.   Champion - acctg. software
6.   Dataflex database
7.   Vision, applications manager
      and Calc, with no mouse
8.   Visi-Trend Plot
9.   Cyllock File Security System
      part hardware and software

Interested parties can contact Bob
Flagg at Learned Mahn at 336-2281.

Many members of our group are compu-
ter professionals. If you need any
custom computer programming or just
need a question or two answered,
chances are there is someone here
who can help you. We have consul-
tants who offer discounts to group
members. For more info contact any
group officer.

TECHNICAL WRITERS

We now have these writers contributing informational columns for our newsletter.

Rich Brown
Systems Analyst

Richard Chambers
Computer Consultant

Bob Flagg
Programmer/Analyst

Mike Hayhurst
Lead Systems Programmer

Mark McNee
Programmer/Technician

Allan Powell
Gameologist

Judy Robinett
Statehouse

We are very fortunate to have these folks donating their expertise to our PC group.

HOW TO SUBMIT AN ARTICLE

If you would like to contribute to our newsletter on a regular or occasional basis, please contact us.

When submitting an article, please put it on a floppy diskette with your name printed on it. The diskette will be returned at the following meeting. If you wish, we will supply the diskette. Articles may be submitted to Bob Robles or Richard Chambers. If you have a modem, you can submit your article via the phone line. Our deadline is the end of the month prior to publication. The ideal format to submit them in is single column and no hyphenation.

IBM Access

Our group has been issued special access to IBMs private bulletin board. We will now have immediate access to Big Blue and the vast resources of their EBBS.

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=   CLASSIFIED   =
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** FOR SALE **

HP-150 Personal Computer With "Magic Touch" Screen, 256K, 2 SSDD Disk Drives, 160 CPS Graphics Printer. Includes PAM & BASIC. New Condition, used less than 6 hours asking $3400. Contact Gregg, 922-5664 (Kuna) or at the meetings.

*** FOR SALE ***

For the IBM or compatible:

1. FAST GRAPH PKG	$35.00
2. HOME ACCT. PLUS	25.00
3. PERFECT CALC	35.00
4. PERFECT FILER	75.00
5. PERFECT WRITE/SPELL	85.00
6. PERFECT LINK	20.00
7. VOLKSMODEM 12 300/1200	210.00
8. IBM SERIAL CARD	50.00
9. IBM PARALLEL CARD	50.00

For the Apple or compatible:

1. SILENTYPE PRINTER W/CARD $100.00
   If interested in the IBM or Apple equipment, contact Dave Jameson at 386-6137 days or 376-2206 after work hours or weekends.

****** WANTED ******

Wish to purchase an expansion set for an IBM-PC Jr. Would like an additional 128K memory and a second disk drive. Please call Rick Barnes at 344-7914 during business hours.

****** FOR SALE ******

APPLE 80-COLUMN TEXT CARD for the Apple IIe, complete with documentation. Fits in Aux #3 slot. This is the small card with no additional memory aboard. $40.00. Contact Rich Chambers 939-9120.

****** WANTED ******

Looking for an AST Six-Pac with 64K memory or less. Game Port not required. Contact Rich Brown at 386-5506 Days, or 322-7720 evenings.

PUBLIC DOMAIN SOFTWARE ADVANTAGES
Written By Rich Chambers

Public Domain (PD) software is an advantage in itself. In many cases, it saves you the time and effort which would normally be required in order for you to sit down and write the program or subroutine yourself from scratch. Often, you are able to take adavntage of the fact that someone has already built just the subroutine you needed, thus making it unnecessary for you "reinvent the wheel." This is the advantage which normally comes to mind first. There are, however, additional advantages. This atricle will touch upon what I preceive to be one of the greatest of these: The instructional value.

When you are new to any task, one of the easiest ways to master it is by following an example. This, when coupled with a bit of study, can go a long way towards improving your knowledge and ability to perform the task in question. Thus, if you are new to computing and programming, it would certainly be advantageous to you to have some working examples to follow and study. This is where much of the available PD software really shines.

Most of this software is written with the new user in mind, and is very well documented. By documented, I mean that the program is both well written, and heavily commented with information which explaines the functions of each subroutine and/or the logic used. Some of the best of these might even be called "tutorials". You run the program, then are able to list the program to find out "How did he do that??"

When I was first introduced to computing, some of the hardest things for me to find were well-documented BASIC and ASSEMBLER

THE COST-EFFECTIVE MODEL "D"
By Dave Mason, R&L Data

The Model "D" is Leading Edge's latest entry into the IBM-PC Work-alike market. "Ho Hum," you say, "who cares about looking at ANOTHER IBM clone." Well, before you write this machine off as a loser, let's look at the what it offers as a "STANDARD" package:

1. An IBM Selectric type Keyboard. (Yes, full-sized ENTER and shift Keys with a comfortable typewriter-style keyboard which includes all of the standard IBM-PC Keys.)

2. Battery backed Clock/Calendar.

3. 130 Watt Power Supply. (The IBM-PC has a 63 watt Power Supply.)

4. 2 DSDD 360K Disk Drives.

5. 12 in. Monochrome Monitor.

6. RGB/Composite Output capability (No color Boards to buy.)

7. Hercules Graphics Emulation is also supported, allowing utili-zation of Hercules-compatible programs.

8. 256K memory expandible to 640K on the motherboard.

9. Disk Drive controller as well as a parallel and Serial port are also located on the mother-board. Plus (4) full-sized expansion slots.

10. MS DOS, GW BASIC, a Technical Reference Manual, and an Opera-tor's Guide.

Complete IBM Compatibility is touted by the company, as well as a full-year warrantee. If it breaks down within the warrantee period, it is repaired free of charge. Also, the company boasts free

NEW MODEM SERVICE BEGINS
By Rich Chambers

How about a telecommunications service which allows you _unlimited_ nighttime/weekend telecommunications access for a flat fee of $25 per month? This is an introductory service from GTE Telenet, aptly named: PC-PURSUIT.

But before you rush out to purchase this service; I should tell you that it's not yet available to Boise. Presently, the service is provided only to persons within the following area codes:

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404 Atlanta  617 Boston   312 Chicago
213 Dallas   303 Denver   313 Detroit
713 Houston  213 L.A.     212 Philad.
415 SanFran  202 Washington D.C.
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I spoke with company representative, Steve DelRocco in Reston, Va. and he indicated that we could not expect the service here until next year, at the earliest. The present network is a prototype system, which they will expand if PC users sign up in large numbers. (Economics rears its ugly head again!)

There are presently many services which allow the PC owner with a MODEM to make a telephone call and read, upload, or download information, e.g. THE SOURCE, COMPUSERVE, and other mainframe operations where massive databases containing extensive information on an almost unimaginable group of subjects and services are available. In addition, there are EBBS services such as GEM STATE DATA ACCESS here in Boise which cater to the personal computer user. These BBS systems are often specialized, providing Public Domain Software, information, programming and program usage tips, electronic mail, etc..

Services such as PC-PURSUIT,

PUBLIC DOMAIN SOFTWARE ADVANTAGES

listings to use as self-learning aids. (That was when the Apple II+ entered the market.) Now, through our group and other sources, (PC, PC WEEK, etc.) this type of software is becoming more and more available.

It should be noted here that programs listed in most commercial publications are normally NOT considered to be Public Domaine software. If you look closely, you will generally see a copywrite notice somewhere in the publication which indicates that programs included have both use and copying limitations.

There it is. If you are interested in learning, these PD programs, coupled with a good manual on the language of interest, can go a long way towards teaching you the rudiments of that language. When you consider the alternative (paying someone to teach you the same information,) I think this value of PD is quite evident!

THE COST-EFFECTIVE MODEL "D"

professional technical support.

This system shows many signs of forethought by the manufacturer. In place of the CTL/ALT/DEL key routine required by the IBM-PC in order to reset the system, the Model "D" has a single reset button which is located at the front of the CPU Chassis. Also, the ON/OFF button is placed on the front of the chassis, easily accessible to the user. Another fine feature is the keyboard connector. In the Model "D", the keyboard cord connects right into the front of the chassis instead of way 'round in the back. The chassis itself is smaller and more compact, leaving you more

NEW MODEM SERVICE BEGINS
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which allow us to access these data-
bases and EBBS systems at a more
economical rate will encourage the
expansion of PC-to-PC and PC-to-
Mainframe services in coming years.
The cost of purchasing a modem is
also decreasing, so PC telecommun-
ications may yet become a fast and
cost-effective method of information
transfer for private users, as well
as those within the business sector.

We'll keep an eye on the
progress of this communications net-
work, and advise you when it becomes
avaiable to our area. Who knows,
perhaps additional telecommuni-
cations services will enter this
market, thus bringing our cost down
even more.

THE COST-EFFECTIVE MODEL "D"
(continued from previous page)

room on your desk for other items.
All this for less than $1500.

Options include a (10) or (20)
Meg hard disk, and a color monitor.
Of course, you may also connect the
peripherals normally utilized with
the IBM-PC.

My collegue, Bruce Burns, will
be on hand at the next meeting to
demonstrate this unit, and "put it
through it's paces". If you cannot
attend the meeting, or just wish to
"test-drive" this system for your-
self, come on in to R&L Data and
give it the once-over.

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LOCAL COMPUTER USER GROUPS

IDAHO IBM-PC USER GROUP (huray!)
Meets the second Tuesday of each
month at 7:00 pm. at Borah High
School in the B-wing, room 126.
You can also reach us at Box 9136,
Boise, Id 83707. For more informa-
tion contact Bob Robles at 465-5116
(9 to 4) or at 342-7250 after 5:00.

MACINTOSH USER'S GROUP
Meets every last Thursday of each
month at The Computer Store.
Call Prodata 342-6878 ask for Gary
Thomas or Joe Fugate.

COMPUTER USERS GROUP OF MAGIC VALLEY
Meeting every 1st and 3rd Tuesday of
each month. (a multi computer usrs
group) For information call 734-5078

ATARI BOISE USERS GROUP
Meets the first Saturday of each
month at Campus Elementary School on
BSU Campus. Time - 1:00 pm. Phone
344-8773 or 362-5666

TRS/MS-DOS USERS GROUP
Contact James Estrada at the Karcher
Mall Radio Shack 467-1066.

BOISE 99'ERS COMPUTER CLUB
Texas Instruments 99/4A Home
Computers. Meets second Tuesday of
each month at Jerry Hough residence;
1331 Colorado, Boise. For info call
375-1968 Jeff Burkhart

PC Boise Users Group
Call Silver Creek Computers for time
and place at 322-5770 or write to
PCBUG, Box 8266, Boise, Id 83707.

APPLE USER'S GROUP
Meets the last Wednesday of the
month at Round Table Pizza, 7100
Fairview av. at 6:60 pm. For info
call Gary Ackaret, 888-1203 or Roy
Hedine 345-0278 Club address: 1411
S. Arcadia, Boise, Id 83705

TANDY 1000 USER GROUP
Contact Allen Powell at 385-0070 for
details. Users of Tandy 1200 & espe-
cially the 2000 are welcome.

TREASURE VALLEY C-64 USER'S GROUP
Meets every 3rd Monday at Round
Table Pizza on Fairview at 7:30 pm.
Phone Evenings 336-9607 Mike Carter.

LOTUS: USER DEFINED MACROS
by Tim R. Wolf

Mention the word "Macro" and most people conjure up images of impossible programs written in cryptic languages. Lotus Macros are not impossible but they can look like Greek to those not familiar with them.

This Article is semi-techinical in nature and it does assume a moderate degree of familiarity with the spreadsheet. I invite you to actually use the Lotus software to generate the macros as you follow along in the article. As in any programming language, there is more than one way to solve a problem. The Macros that follow may or may not be the most efficient way to accomplish a task, but the intent is strictly educational.

Begin by creating the following sheet which is a Checking-Account program:

COLUMN:	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
				BEGINING	
				BALANCE: 1000.00	
	PAID	DATE	DEPOSIT	CHECK	BALANCE
ROW: (6)	BURT LANCASTER	08/12/84		123.54	876.46
	ALBERT EINSTIEN	08/13/84		15.09	861.37
	DOM DELOISE	08/15/84		23.98	837.39
	FRANK HERBERT	08/15/84		14.00	823.39
	EDGAR POE	08/16/84	450.00	345.00	928.39
	OLIVIA N. JOHN	08/22/84		12.41	915.98
	DEPOSIT	08/25/84	345.00		1260.98
	BO DERECK	09/01/84		31.40	1229.58
	MELISSA MANCHESTER	09/01/84	562.00	22.50	1769.08
	DONNA WALKER	09/04/84		165.00	1604.08
			-------	-------	
		TOTALS:	1357.00	752.92	

Building the Test spreadsheet:
Start "Burt Lancaster" in cell A6. The date fields should be character (ex: type '08/12/84 - note the single quote). The total figures are formulas: 1357.00 = @sum(c5..c16).

The Balance column contains formulas:
Cell e6 = +d3+c6-d6. Cell d7 = +e6+c7-d7 (english: previous balance, plus deposits that date, minus checks written that date). Copy the formula in cell e7 down to the bottom of the range. Type what ever data you please in the detail lines. Also, note that this is an actually useful spreadsheet.

Save the file now as b:CHECKS

Now let's build the macro. This particular Macro will have 4 functions that you can choose. What makes the Macro really interesting is that you call it up like like a Lotus command line, and you choose what you want to do in a menu at the top of the screen. These Macros are designed to automate common tasks such as printing, file saving and sorting.

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LOTUS: User defined macros
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Begin the macro by positioning your cursor in cell g1. Range-Name g1 with the following names: '\M' and '\O'. The 'M' is how you call up the macro (ALT-M for Menu) and the '\O' is the autoexecute macro name so this macro will engage whenever the file is retrieved. Type the following string in g1 exactly as shown, without the brackets: ['/XMMENU~]. This indicates the Macro is a User Defined Macro as opposed to other types of Macros. The tilde (~) is the Lotus key for <Return>.

Next move your cursor to cell h1 and Range-Name that cell 'MENU' then in the same cell, (h1) type the word "QUIT" <Return>. Going Horizontally in row 1, type the following words, one per cell starting in h1:

	(H)	(I)	(J)	(K)
(1)	QUIT	SORT	PRINT	FILESAVE
(2)				

Now in row (2), directly below each label, type a short sentence describing each of the functions. Specifically, in:
    Cell h2 type "QUIT AND RETURN TO STANDARD SPREADSHEET"
    Cell i2 type "SORT DATA ALPHABTICALLY BY NAME"
    Cell j2 type "PRINT CHECKBOOK DATA"
    Cell k2 type "SAVE FILE ON B:DRIVE".
(Change Column Widths if you desire to see everything you have typed.)

The Macro can be tested now by simply pressing and holding the ALT key and then pressing the "M" key. If every thing is functioning properly a menu appeared at the top of the screen. Use the cursor control keys (right and left arrow) to highlight the possible choices. Since no workable code has been written, none of the macros are functional. The actual coding of a Macro is done by typing each Lotus Command in the column below each menu choice entered in row 1. A good and easy example is the FILESAVE macro. Begining in cell k3 type a single-quote and then all of the keystrokes you would normally type to save a file:

                    '/FSB:CHECKS~R

By looking carefully at this command, it can be decoded. The quote is used to prevent the next character (slash) from calling-up the Lotus Command line. The (slash) will be typed by the macro once it is running. The 'F' is the FILE option, 'S' indicates SAVE, B:CHECKS is the file-name and the Tilde tells Lotus to press Return. Finally the Replace command is typed and your file is saved. Call your Macro by pressing ALT-M; highlight the FILESAVE choice and press <RETURN>. Your file is saved.

When a macro is running, it checks each cell in a column until it finds a blank cell which will terminate the Macro. You should code Macros with only a few characters per cell - this greatly aids in readability. Space restrictions prevent me from explaining the remaining Macros in detail, so they will be listed along with the proper Cell addresses and short (lower-case) comments which are not typed.
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LOTUS: User defined macros
(continued from previous page)

CELL	COMMAND	EXPLANATION
h1	QUIT	
h2	QUIT AND RETURN TO STANDARD SPREADSHEET	
h3	{HOME}	-cursor to cell A1
i1	SORT	
i2	SORT DATA ALPHABETICALLY BY NAME.	
i3	{GOTO}A6~	
i4	'/DSD{BS}.	-The cell reads Slash,
i5	{END}{DOWN}{RIGHT}	Data, Sort, backspce
i6	{RIGHT}{RIGHT}~	to reset range to
i7	PA5~A~	cursor position.
i8	SC5~A~	the (.) anchors rnge.
i9	G	
i10	{HOME}	-PA5~A~ sets primary key in ccl A5 ascnd. This could be eliminated if the proper keys were in place & saved.
j1	PRINT	
j2	PRINTS CHECKBOOK DATA	
j3	'/PPR{HOME}.{END}{RIGHT}	-This mess will automatically grow
j4	{END}{DOWN}{END}{LEFT}	as your database gets larger. Not-
j5	{END}{UP}	ice that it is taking the long way
j6	{END}{RIGHT}{RIGHT}{RIGHT}~	around to color the print range.
j7	AGQ	Try it by manually to see exactly
j8	{HOME}	what it does.
k1	FILESAVE	
k2	SAVES UPDATED FILE	
k3	'/FSCHECKS~R	-This choice is called FILESAVE instead of just SAVE so the S in Save does not conflict with the S in Sort. You can choose a menu choice by simply typing the first char of the name. Duplicate first letters are not recommended.

Editors Note: Tim Wolf is a systems programmer at DECISION POINT here in Boise. Although new to the group, he was eager to jump in and assist our membership. We are hoping that his hectic schedule will allow him to contribute a monthly column to our newsletter. Please note that this is a working checkbook program, easily adaptable to your own personal needs.